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AUTHOR Goldhor, Herbert
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ABSTRACT

Index values for American public library circulation and expenditures are presented in five statistical tables. The circulation index values are given for each year from 1939 through 1974, and expenditure index values are given for 1951 through 1974. These figures are then compared with figures from the "American Library Directory" and from the United States Bureau of Census "City Government Finances." Another table shows the Index of American Public Library Expenditures corrected for inflation. A complete list of the published reports of the Indices of American Public Library Statistics is included in an appendix. A master summary of all published index values for both circulation and expenditures is also appended. (DS/PF)

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the indices of american public library statistics

herbert goldhor*

graduate school of library science
university of illinois
urbana, illinois

Since 1949 the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science has been compiling and publishing the Index of American Public Library Circulation, and since 1963 the Index of American Public Library Expenditures. In each case, the index values are available for a decade or more before the first published report. For all these years the published reports of these indices appeared in the *ALA Bulletin* and now in *American Libraries*, except that the index values for 1972 and 1973 were first printed in *Illinois Libraries*. A complete list of the published reports of the IAPLS to date constitutes Appendix A here.

There have been three articles in library literature which describe the procedure used in compiling these indices; these are also listed in Appendix A, and the method there described is essentially the same as is now used. In general, the base year of the two index series has been shifted each decade, both (a) to reduce the spread of index values calculated from the annual reports of the libraries in the sample, and (b) to reconstitute the universe in line with the latest census figures and draw a new sample from the reconstituted universe. For one decade, the 1960s, the universe consisted of United States public libraries which served a population of

*With the assistance of Dr. George Vinal Smith.

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35,000 or more; before that and since 1970, the universe consists of libraries that serve 25,000 people or more. The index values for the 1960s have been merged into the series of values before and after that decade, because there is reason to believe that public library circulation and expenditures have fluctuated much the same, regardless of the size of population served.

From 1939 to 1961, we secured quarterly as well as annual reports of public library circulation changes. These may be found in the citations in Appendix A, but we no longer work with any but annual data. Similarly until 1970, we analyzed total circulation into adult fiction, adult non-fiction, and juvenile percentages; since more and more libraries are unable to report their circulation in such detail, we have solicited and published the percentages for only adult and juvenile circulation since 1970. Appendix B consists of a master summary of all annual index values for both circulation and expenditures, with percentages of the main components of each, as originally published in the sources listed in Appendix A. We have now linked together all the values for each index, using 1970 in each case as the base year, with results as shown in Tables 1 and 2.¹

¹ Since the original data were not available to us, and since we know that the index values for the 1960s were mistakenly calculated as means instead of medians, the index values in Tables 1 and 2 here (for the years before 1961) are to be regarded as approximations.

Table 1. Index of American Public Library
Circulation: 1939-1974

	(1) Index Value (2) % Adult (3) % Juvenile								
	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
(1)	65	61	56	49	46	46	46	47	47
(2)	67%	69%	66%	64%	64%	62%	62%	62%	58%
(3)	33%	31%	34%	36%	36%	38%	38%	38%	42%
	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
(1)	47	51	53	54	56	58	62	64	67
(2)	58%	55%	56%	56%	51%	51%	50%	50%	50%
(3)	42%	45%	44%	44%	49%	49%	50%	50%	50%
	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965
(1)	70	75	78	81	85	88	89	92	93
(2)	49%	49%	50%	50%	51%	49%	50%	48%	49%
(3)	51%	51%	50%	50%	49%	51%	50%	52%	51%
	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
(1)	90	92	96	98	100	103	100	98	100*
(2)	50%	50%	51%	56%	61%	63%	65%	66%	67%
(3)	50%	50%	49%	44%	39%	37%	35%	34%	33%

*Corrected from the figure originally published.

Table 2. Index of American Public Library
Expenditures: 1951-1974

- (1) Index Value
(2) % for Salaries
(3) % for Materials
(4) % for All Other Expenditures

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
(1)	21	24	25	27	30	31	34	37
	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
(1)	40	43	45	48	51	56	60	65
(2)	—	—	—	70%	69%	70%	65%	70%
(3)	—	—	—	16%	15%	14%	13%	15%
(4)	—	—	—	14%	16%	16%	22%	15%
	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
(1)	75	83	90	100	111	117	113	141*
(2)	70%	68%	67%	66%	64%	65%	68%	67%
(3)	15%	15%	17%	19%	18%	19%	17%	17%
(4)	15%	17%	16%	15%	18%	16%	15%	16%

*Corrected from the figure originally published.

From time to time, it happens that we can compare the Indices of American Public Library Statistics against a series of more comprehensive collections of comparable data. One such series consists of the state totals of public library circulation, in the more recent editions of the *American Library Directory*. Unfortunately the data so reported in any one volume are not for the same year for all the states. We totalled the state figures given in the last several editions, constructed an index series for the ALD data and compared it with the Index of American Public Library Circulation (recalculated to use 1971 as the base year), with the results as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of Index Values from Circulation
Totals in ALD, with IAPLC: 1960-1972

Edition of ALD	Year of Data	Total Circulation (in millions)	ALD Index	IAPLC
23	1960	692	77%	79%
24	1962	779	87%	85%
25	1965	830	92%	90%
26	1967	822	92%	89%
27	1969	846	94%	95%
28	1971	898	100%	100%
29	1972	880	98%	97%

Another series of data on municipal public library expenditures from 1968-69 through 1972-73 are found in Parris N. Glendening, "Municipal Finances: Change and Continuity," *International City Management*

Association *Urban Data Service* 6 (December 1974) 13 p.; his Table 1 (p. 2) gives data on percentage increases in library expenditures of all United States cities, drawn from the United States Bureau of Census, *City Government Finances*, as shown below. The United States Index includes county, district, and regional public libraries as well as municipal libraries.

Table 4. Comparison of Index Values from Census Data with IAPLE: 1969-1973

	Census Data	US Index (recalculated)
From 1968-69 to 1969-70	10%	11%
From 1969-70 to 1970-71	9%	11%
From 1970-71 to 1971-72	4.5%	5%
From 1971-72 to 1972-73	7.5%	14%
From 1968-69 to 1972-73	35%	48%

The figures on expenditures, in Table 2 above, are of course inflated by the decline in the purchasing power of the dollar. Librarians are well aware that the price of books has gone up sharply, especially in recent years. The average retail price of hardcover trade and technical books in this country went from \$4.13 in 1953 to \$8.47 in 1968 and to \$14.09 in 1974.² To show the full effect of inflation, we took the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index,³ converted it to a 1970 base, and divided each year's value into the Index of American Public Library Expenditures for that year with the results shown in Table 5.

²Bowker *Annual of Library and Book Trade Information*, 1961-1975.

³Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1974 (GPO, 1974), p. 411.

Table 5. Index of American Public Library Expenditures, Corrected for Inflation: 1951-1974

(1) Consumer Price Index (1970=100)

(2) IAPLE corrected (row (1) in Table 2 divided by row (1) in Table 5)

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
(1)	67	69	69	69	69	70	72
(2)	31	35	36	39	43	44	47
	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964
(1)	75	75	77	78	78	79	80
(2)	49	53	56	58	62	65	70
	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
(1)	81	84	86	90	95	100	104
(2)	74	77	87	92	95	100	107
	1972	1973	1974				
(1)	108	115	124				
(2)	108	116	114				

Appendix A: Published Reports of the Indices of
American Public Library Statistics

ALA Bulletin

- Volume: 43 (1949) p. 334-335 (a), 372.
44 (1950) p. 87 (a), 234, 308, 448.
45 (1951) p. 101 (a), 343.
46 (1952) p. 186 (a), 234.
47 (1953) p. 75, 172 (a), 374, 426.
48 (1954) p. 254 (a), 405, 533.
49 (1955) p. 299 (a), 406, 578.
50 (1956) p. 114, 292 (a), 464, 577.
51 (1957) p. 55, 474, 640 (a).
52 (1958) p. 113, 502 (a), 629, 790.
53 (1959) p. 215, 702 (a), 839.
54 (1960) p. 477 (a), 831.
55 (1961) p. 251, 646 (a).
56 (1962) p. 149, 474 (a).
57 (1963) p. 435.
58 (1964) p. 711.
59 (1965) p. 401.
60 (1966) p. 347.
61 (1967) p. 557.
62 (1968) p. 492.
63 (1969) p. 556.

American Libraries V. 4 (1973) p. 294.

Illinois Libraries V. 56 (1974) p. 582.

American Libraries V. 6 (1975) p. 379.

Note: (a) following a page number indicates where the annual index report appears, as contrasted with quarterly reports.

The following articles describe how the indices are prepared:

Herbert Goldhor, "The Index of Illinois Public Library Circulation," *Library Quarterly* 19 (1949) pp. 46-54.

"Index of American Public Library Circulation," *ALA Bulletin* 43 (1949) pp. 334-35.

Richard D. Walker, "A Brief Review of the Indexes of American Public Library Statistics," *Illinois Libraries* 45 (April 1963) pp. 229-36.

Appendix B: A Summary of Published Values of the Indices
of American Public Library Statistics

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	
(1) Circulation Index	100	98	90	80	75	75	
(2) % Adult Fiction	46%	48%	44%	43%	42%	40%	
(3) % Adult Nonfiction	21%	21%	22%	21%	22%	22%	
(4) % Juvenile	33%	31%	34%	36%	36%	38%	
	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	
(1) Circulation Index	75	76	76	76	82	85	
(2) % Adult Fiction	40%	39%	35%	34%	32%	31%	
(3) % Adult Nonfiction	22%	23%	23%	24%	23%	25%	
(4) % Juvenile	38%	38%	42%	42%	45%	44%	
	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955		
(1) Circulation Index (1939=100)	86	89	92	102	103		
(2) % Adult Fiction	30%	27%	27%	26%	27%		
(3) % Adult Nonfiction	26%	24%	24%	24%	23%		
(4) % Juvenile	44%	49%	49%	50%	50%		
(5) Circ. Index (1960=100)	63	66	68	74	76		
(6) Expend. Index (1960=100)	49	55	59	63	69		
	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	
(1) Circ. Index (1939=100)	110	114	119	126	127	124	
(2) % Adult Fiction	26%	25%	24%	24%	24%	24%	
(3) % Adult Nonfiction	24%	24%	25%	26%	26%	27%	
(4) % Juvenile	50%	51%	51%	50%	50%	49%	
(5) Circ. Index (1960=100)	81	85	92	95	100	106	
(6) Expend. Index (1960=100)	72	80	86	93	100	105	
(7) Circ. Index (1970=100)	—	—	—	—	—	85	
(8) Expend. Index (1970=100)	—	—	—	—	—	45	
	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
(1) Circ. Index (1960=100)	107	110	116	117	114	112	107
(2) % Adult Fiction	24%	22%	21%	22%	23%	23%	23%
(3) % Adult Nonfiction	25%	28%	27%	27%	27%	27%	28%
(4) % Juvenile	51%	50%	52%	51%	50%	50%	49%
(5) Circ. Index (1970=100)	88	89	92	93	90	92	96
(6) Expend. Index (1960=100)	112	123	134	145	151	163	182
(7) % Salaries	70%	69%	70%	65%	70%	70%	68%
(8) % Materials	16%	15%	14%	13%	15%	15%	15%
(9) % Other Expenditures	14%	16%	16%	22%	15%	15%	17%
(10) Expend. Index (1970=100)	45	48	51	60	65	75	83

	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
(1) Circ. Index (1970=100)	98	100	103	100	98	101(a)
(2) % Adult	56%*	61%	63%	65%	66%	67%
(3) % Juvenile	44%*	39%	37%	35%	34%	33%
(4) Expend. Index (1970=100)	90	100	111	117	133	143(a)
(5) % Salaries	67%*	65%(a)	64%	65%	68%	67%
(6) % Materials	17%*	19%	18%	19%	17%	17%
(7) % Other Expenditures	16%*	16%(a)	18%	16%	15%	16%

*Previously unpublished, percentages for 1969 by interpolation.

(a) See corrected figure in Tables 1 or 2 above.